

## An Example of an Archetype Format of the Qur'ān Design in the Early 14th Century

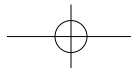
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### *Abstract*

The theme of this article is the design pattern of the calligraphy and illumination of a 14<sup>th</sup> century Qur'ān manuscript kept in the National Archive of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in Kyrenia (Mev.T.85/1/[3]) that is unique in character with its decoration repertoire in a free manner. This is a rare copy of the Qur'ān text, dated 717/1317, written on paper in *rayḥān* script, by using black ink for the text, red ink for the punctuation marks and gold for the titles of the *sūras* which are in Kufic and *muḥaqqaq* script. The manuscript has a variety of marginal illuminations, designed in a rather unusual character though not bearing high artistic design quality, apparently to guide the reader. Thus, it is the aim of the authors to bring this manuscript as one of the archetype styles to the attention of the scholars together with an attempt to draw out some theoretical aspects in view of the Qur'ān illumination manners of the concerned century in comparison to the ones produced in certain districts of the Islamic countries alongside the theories of Al-Ghazālī (1058–1111), the Islamic philosopher, regarding the amount of recitation and organising the Qur'ān text into parts. Also, the paper attempts to put forward some ideas about its history and by which means it found its way to Ömeriye Mosque, Nicosia (Cyprus) in 1019/1610–11 with some remarks about the formation of the Islamic manuscript collection in Cyprus.

### *Introduction*

Cyprus is an island where a deep rooted legacy of the Islamic culture is revealed in all its architectural and material cultural heritage dating back to the Ottoman period. Among these, Islamic manuscripts collection takes an important part. The manuscripts in the collection of Northern Cyprus are believed to have been formed during the Ottoman period of the island beginning in 1570 in view of the *waqf* records. The collection consists of mainly Persian, Arabic and Ottoman Turkish

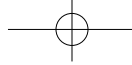


manuscripts which are assumed to have been imported from Anatolia and other Ottoman provinces. There are nearly 2500 manuscripts in the collection which is currently preserved in the National Archive of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) located in Kyrenia, a city on the Northern coastal area. The majority of these are the productions of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries' calligraphers and the ones with artistic values are mainly the works of the Ottoman calligraphers and illuminators.<sup>1</sup> Manuscripts bequeathed by Sultan Murad III and Sultan Mahmud II to the principal *madrasa* or library have formed the seed of the collection while others were the donations of the citizens to the Islamic institutions mainly to the mosques, *madrasas*, *tekkes* or *zāwiyas*.

A Qur'ān manuscript (Mev.T.85/1/[3]), which is the theme of this article, currently kept in the National Archive (TRNC), originally a pious foundation dedicated to Ömeriye Mosque in Nicosia,<sup>2</sup> designed and

<sup>1</sup>) A project for the compiling and publishing a catalogue of the illuminated Islamic manuscripts in the National Archive (TRNC) is in progress by the authors of this article. This so-called MEKB Project is partially financed by the Ministry of Turkish Education and Cultural Affairs of TRNC (MEKB) and Eastern Mediterranean University from a fund provided by the Nicosia Embassy of Turkish Republic. We extend our acknowledgements to all institutions for the fund and to the director as well as the staff of the Archive.

<sup>2</sup>) Ömeriye Cami'i (Turkish name; also locally called *Ömergê* Cami'i and Hazret-i Ömer Cami'i according to the deed of pious foundation in this manuscript) is one of the *waqf* (pious foundation) monuments registered in the *awqāf* of Lālā Mustafa Pasha (d.1580). It is located in the southern part of the divided city Nicosia which is under the control of Cyprus Republic. The mosque is also called Cami'i Cedid (New Mosque) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century documents. It was rebuilt on the ruins of St. Augustinian Church, which was part of a monastery. According to a legend, it was visited by Caliph 'Umar and also it was the place where Lālā Mustafa Pasha and his army had their first prayers upon entering into the city. R. C. JENNINGS, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and Mediterranean World, 1570–1640* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp. 48, 55. Jennings also refers to another legend. Accordingly, Lālā Mustafa Pasha once had a vision of 'Umar who recommended him to conquer the island called Cyprus for the sake of Islam. When his dream came true, Lālā Mustafa Pasha constructed a mosque after the name of Caliph 'Umar and established a *waqf* to support this financially (*Ibid.*, pp. 55–56). Literature is rather rich for the reason of having built a mosque here. Another legend is cited by George Jeffery who worked as the Director of the Antiquities Department during the British Colonial period as follows: "Caliph 'Umar is said to visit Cyprus and resided in a ruined church in Nicosia on his travel from Damascus to Egypt. When Mustafa, the Turkish General, heard of this legend in 1570, he proceeded to identify the



illuminated in a free manner, deserves a special attention as a unique piece of material culture because of its illumination style which could be assumed to reflect an archetype format of Qur'ān organisation.

After closely examining this rare piece of the Qur'ān a search for similar copies in other collections within the possibilities was made which resulted with no other identical one so far. Thus, with an instinct that this is a unique copy, although not of very high artistic character in view of its illuminations though the calligraphy is the work of a skilled master, regarding the unusual design and scheme of the marginal illuminations, this manuscript is selected for a publication as an article so as to bring it to the attention of the scholars.

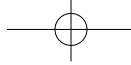
### Description of the Manuscript

The manuscript (Mev.T.85/1/ [3]) we are bringing to the attention of the researchers in this article is a 14<sup>th</sup> century Qur'ān which has three different styles of scripts and ink colour, a characteristic which could be seen in some contemporary works, while its marginal decoration devices are revealing a bizarre characteristic as compared with its contemporaries.

This manuscript (size: 35.5 × 21.5 cm and 419 folios) is dated 717/1317 and written on polished paper in *rayḥān* script eleven lines to the page, by using black ink for the text, red ink for the punctuation marks and gold for the titles of the *sūras* which are in Kufic script and black ink for the *Basmalas* in *muḥaqqaq* script. The vowel points are indicated in black and the recitation vowels in red ink. The pages are not framed except fols. 211b, 212a, 212b and 213a in which the text is reduced to nine lines per page and framed with a red rule (Fig. 16 a–b). The physical condition of the manuscript, in general sense, is rather damaged. There are humidity stains and worm holes on several pages, whereas unskilful restoration attempts by pasting strips of papers on the edges of several pages are observed. However, the manuscript is almost a complete copy of the Qur'ān text although there are some loose pages due to

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Augustinian Church with its porch as the lodging of 'Umar, and the mosque then instituted on this spot was called the "Ömeriye". G. JEFFERY, *A Description of the Historic Monuments of Cyprus* (Nicosia, 1918 [reprinted edition: London: Zeno Publisher, 1983]), p. 39; G. JEFFERY, *The Mosques of Nicosia: Historical and Architectural Buildings*, New Illustrated Series: 7 (Nicosia: Cyprus Government Printers Office, 1935), pp. 20–22.



the harm of the binding strings. The first five folios have different character due to replacement of some missing pages during later times. There are also some marginal corrections in the manuscript although these are quite few. The date 1019/1610–11 with reference to the bequest of this manuscript to the Ömeriye Mosque by a certain *Muḥarram Pashā*<sup>3</sup> is indicated on fol. 1a, opposite to the *doublure*, which will be discussed in the part under the subtitle of Provenance.

### The Binding of the Manuscript

The binding of the manuscript is rather worn out and seems to have been a later addition during the Ottoman period, perhaps when the manuscript was somehow transferred into the possession of Ottomans probably in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The outer front and back covers of the brown leather binding are stamped with compositions of oval centre-piece with pendant escutcheons. The centre-pieces on both sides are composed with knotted cloud motives symmetrically designed on two axis. Maroon coloured leather has been pasted carelessly onto the back of the binding encrusting over part of the cover, as a result of an unsophisticated attempt in order to restore it. The flap of the binding is missing, probably torn out (Fig. 1). There is a note pasted on the *doublure* of the front cover which is a record of laying a *waqf* (pious foundation), a bequeath in the form of a certain amount of money to Ömeriye Mosque in Nicosia by Ḥusayn dede, a disciple of the mosque.

### The Design of the Text and Illuminations in the Manuscript

The Qur'ān text begins on fol. 1b which is rather damaged and badly restored. Here, some parts of the first six lines of the *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* can be perceived which had been rewritten later since the first five folios were probably damaged or torn out, presumably due to its decorative character. The first lines of *Sūrat al-Baqara* are to be seen on fol. 2a which continues in the following pages. The *rayḥān* script on these first five folios is different from the *rayḥān* script of the manuscript in the

<sup>3</sup>) Pashā (*Paşa*) is a word usually indicating a high rank in the Ottoman administration. However, it is a word derived from Old Turkish 'bēshē' (beşe) and is usually the title to denote the elder brother. (O.T.D.S: Osmanlıca Türkçe Derleme Sözlüğü: see <http://www.osmanlicaturkce.com/>). (01.09.2010)

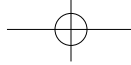


Figure 1: Binding of the Ömeriye Mosque Qur'ān, added to the manuscript during the Ottoman period, c. 17th century. (©Yıldız 2010).



Figure 2: One of the first five folios (fol.3a) with āyas of Sūra al-Baqara of the Ömeriye Qur'ān, where the text in rayḥān script has been rewritten, probably during the Ottoman period, c.17th century. (©Yıldız 2010)

rest of the following pages. The text on these five folios lacks any pause marks indicating the end of *āyas* (verses) (Fig. 2).

The original Qur'ān text of the manuscript begins on fol. 6a inscribed by a master calligrapher with the original *rayḥān* script which is more cursive in appearance. It is written on slightly polished paper and the *āyas* are indicated by red coloured and black outlined pause marks recalling inverted commas (Fig. 3). This page is again revealing the unskilful restoration attempts with pasted strips of papers on the edges. Many folios similarly have humidity stains in some parts which prove that the manuscript has been kept for years in bad condition.

It is remarkable that all *sūra* headings are written in short Kufic script in gold and outlined in red ink; on the contrary, the *basmalas* are written in *muḥaqqaq* script in black ink. In some pages, the *sūra* headings are drawn with bold letters in greenish gold that have black ink double outlines and small red dots for punctuation marks while the eyes of the letters are left void (fol. 305a). In some such cases, the letters of *basmalas* are thickly outlined in red ink (fols. 237b, 305a, 313b). The *sūra* headings cite the title of the *sūra*, the number of total *āyas* (verses), and usually the location where the *sūra* had been revealed depending on the length of the title of the *sūra*.



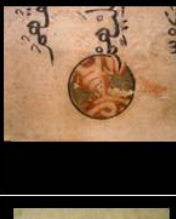
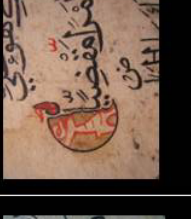
Figure 3: The beginning of the original text of the Ömeriye Qur'an on fol. 6a. (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 4: Sūra of Yusuf in Ömeriye Qur'an on fol. 164b. (©Yıldız 2010)

Some examples could be given here to show the case as follows: the heading of the third chapter (fol. 37a) which consists of two hundred *āyas* (verses) is: *Sūrat 'Āl Imrān mi'a itnān āya Makka*"; the heading of the fourth chapter on fol. 56b which has one hundred seventy six verses is *Sūrat al-Nisā' mi'a sab'un wa-sitta*; the heading of the tenth chapter on fol. 146a which has one hundred and nine *āyas* is *Sūrat Yūnus ṣallā llāh mi'a wa-tis'a āya*; the heading of the twelfth chapter (fol. 164b ) which consists of one hundred eleven *āyas* is *Sūrat Yūsuf sa'd mi'a wa-iḥdā 'aš shar āya Makka* (Fig. 4); the heading of the sixteenth chapter on fol. 185b which has one hundred and twenty-eight *āyas* is *Sūrat al-Naḥl mi'a wa-išhrūn wa-tamāniya* (in this case *Makka* is added in red letter on the top of the title as a correction); heading of the nineteenth chapter on fol. 212b which has ninety eight *āyas* is *Sūrat Maryam tis'un wa-tamāniya* (Fig. 16b ); the heading of the twenty-fourth chapter on fol. 243b which has sixty four *āyas* is *Sūrat al-Nūr sittūn wa-arba' āya Madīna*".

The manuscript has several marginal decorations in quite a variety of ornaments. The marginal ornaments marking groups of ten verses are composed with the word *'ašar* written with short eastern Kufic script in red ink and enclosed within a circle in brick brown colour (See Table 1). Usually these are positioned in parallel to the text lines while occasionally they are drawn diagonally or vertically. For example, the *'ašar* rosettes on verses fol. 11a: 90; fol. 23b: 200; fol. 31a: 250 are positioned

| Table 1. Marginal Rosettes which Indicates the 'Aṣar (10th verse) of the Sūra.                    |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br>Fol. 6a    | <br>Fol. 17b    | <br>Fol. 39a   | <br>Fol. 56b   | <br>Fol. 152a  |
| <br>Fol. 154b  | <br>Fol. 168b   | <br>Fol. 194a  | <br>Fol. 208a  | <br>Fol. 214a  |
| <br>Fol. 230b | <br>Fol. 265 a | <br>Fol. 277a | <br>Fol. 390b | <br>Fol. 392a |
| Yıldız - Mahir                                                                                    |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                  |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |

vertically (Fig. 5). The most interesting of these illuminations are to be seen in the margins of some folios which are composed in rectangular form consisting of some words usually bearing similarity with the design of the *sūra* headings. These are primitively formed and laid out vertically to the text lines. These illuminations (fols. 34a, 203b, 209b, 216a, 237b, 255a, 265a, 365a), painted in gold, are designed with interlace, lattice and



Figure 5: “Ashar” medallion in the margin on fol. 31a (detail).  
(©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 6: “Ashar” Medallion and illumination including the words “nişf and tis’a within a rectangular frame on fol. 34a (2:280).  
(©Yıldız 2010)

palmette motives. One of these on fol. 34a containing the words *nişf* and *tis’a* is taking place on the left and right sides of the ‘ašar medallion, both the rectangle and script framed with double black lines filled in with green shades and red hatched lines filling the inner space of the rectangle (Fig. 6) while another one on fol. 209b (opposite to 18:71–74) is inscribed horizontally from top to bottom in the vertically designed rectangular frame with the words “*nişf al-Qur’ān wa-nişf as sub*”<sup>4</sup> (Fig. 7). Some of these rectangular form decorations are *sajda* marks such as *sajda* (fol. 237b), *sajda-wā he* (fol. 216a), *sajda wāhid*<sup>5</sup> (fol. 255a); some of the *sajda* marks are also intermingled with the ‘ašar medallion in the middle (fols. 237b, 255a, 240b<sup>6</sup>) (Fig. 8; Table 2). One of these on fol. 155a is a drop-shaped medallion (opposite to 10:105–106) without inscription (Fig. 9). This is a widely used ornament motif in some contemporary works<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup>) Half of the *Qur’an* and half of one of seven. This is the sign to indicate the end of the 74<sup>th</sup> āya of the *sūra* which is the *hizb* 31 and *juz’* 16 of the *sūrat al-Kahf* and also the first half of the *Qur’an* text in this manuscript which is totally 418 folios.

<sup>5</sup>) *Sajda one*.

<sup>6</sup>) *‘Ašar* and *as-sub‘ l-ḥāmis* (the one of seventh of the fifth [1/7 of the 5<sup>th</sup>]).

<sup>7</sup>) A page from a *Qur’ān* in N. Khalili Collection with similarly designed illuminated rosettes in the margin, probably copied in Cairo, Shāban AH 729/June 1329 AD is published by D. JAMES, *The Master Scribes: Qur’ans of 10th to 14th Centuries AD*, (The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art), The Nour Foundation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 162–167, no. 41.

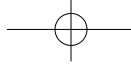


Figure 7: The 'ashar medallion and illumination including the words *niṣf al-Qur'ān wa niṣf as-sub'* on fol. 209b (18: 74) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 8: Illumination in the margin including the words 'ashar in the central medallion and *sajda wāhid* on fol. 255a (25: 60) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010)

although we could not exactly say whether it signifies a certain part of the Qur'ān. Another marginal decoration is the circular wheel shaped ornament design on fol. 17b (Fig. 10). Although it could also be considered as an 'ashar mark, this sign is presumably designed distinctly to indicate the *āya* 2:150<sup>8</sup> in *sūrat al-Baqara* that instructs the prayers to turn their face towards the *qibla* (the *al-Masjid al-Haram* in Makka), while another diamond shape marginal decoration designed rather roughly bearing no inscription on fol. 265a, (27:26), is used to indicate the *sajda* position. Also, there are some rosette compositions which contain intertwining knots and flower petals, one of which is on fol. 189a, used to mark the *sajda* position (16:49) (Fig. 11) and two of them are in the *Sūrat Maryam* on fols. 212b-213a opposite to 19:01 and 19:05. Two rosettes comprising of roughly drawn intertwining knot motifs in red

<sup>8</sup>) "Whencesoever thou comest forth turn thy face toward the Inviolable Place of Worship; and wheresoever ye may be (O Muslims) turn your faces toward it (when ye pray) so that men may have no argument against you, save such of them as do injustice—Fear them not, but fear Me!—and so that I may complete My grace upon you, and that ye may be guided". (2:150) (*The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān*, Tr. by M. M. PICKTHALL, Islamic Call Society (Tripoli, 1973), p. 28.

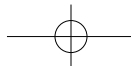




Figure 9: Illuminated drop shaped rosette with a palmette motif in the margin on fol. 155a (10:105–106) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 10: 'ashar written in a circular illuminated medallion on fol. 17b (2:150) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010)

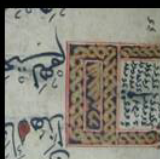


Figure 11: Illuminated petalled rosette with an interlacing motif which marks the sajda, and the 'ashar medallion on fol. 189a (16:49–50) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010).

colour, interlocked in a black outlined circle on fol. 390b (67:30) and fol. 392a (68:50) are indicating 'ašar marks (see Table 1).

On some pages of the Qur'ān, there are some compositions in calligraphic form in the margins which contain the word "sajda" in the vertical direction, some drawn in gold, some in red outlines, so as to mark the requisition of prostration. These are again written in short Kufic script [fol. 125b (7:206); fol. 175a (13:16); fol. 203b (17:108); fol. 315a (38:24); fol. 332b (41:38)] (Fig. 12), some of them even upside down, while some of these are intertwined with the 'ašar medallion (fols. 409a (84:22), 414b (96:20) (Fig. 13) (also see Table 2). On some pages, above and below the 'ašar medallions, there are other devices, some of them beginning with the word *nusf*, and some numbers in written form which are also in short Kufic script. These are the most unusual decorative symbols of the manuscript which are used to indicate the certain parts or fractions of

Table 2. *Sajdah* Marks in the Qur'an

|                                                                                      |                    |                                                                                      |                    |                                                                                    |                    |                                                                                   |                     |                                                                                     |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
|   | Fol. 125b S. 7:207 |   | Fol. 175a S. 13:16 |  | Fol. 189a S. 16:49 |  | Fol. 203b s. 17:108 |    | Fol. 315a S. 38:24 |
|   | Fol. 233a S. 22:18 |   | Fol. 237b S. 22:77 |  | Fol. 255a S. 25:60 |  | Fol. 265a S. 27:26  |  | Fol. 409a S. 84:21 |
|  | Fol. 332b S. 41:36 |  | Fol. 365b S. 53:60 |  | Fol. 414a S. 96:19 |                                                                                   |                     |                                                                                     |                    |

the Qur'ān, which are as follows: *as-sub' al- thānī*<sup>9</sup> (fol. 64b 4:76), *as-sub' al-thālī*<sup>10</sup> (fol. 123a 7:170) (Fig. 14); *nisf as-sub*<sup>11</sup> (fol. 151b 10:60);

<sup>9</sup>) The one of seventh of the second [1/7 of the 2<sup>nd</sup>].

<sup>10</sup>) The one of the seventh of the third [1/7 of the 3<sup>rd</sup>].

<sup>11</sup>) The half of the one of the seventh [1/2 of 1/7].



Figure 12: Sajda written in short Eastern Kufic script and outlined in gold and red in the margin on fol. 175a (13: 16) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 13: Sajda and ʿaṣar on fol. 409a (84: 22) (detail). (©Yıldız 2010).

*as-subʿ l-rābi*<sup>12</sup> (fol. 180b 14:36) (Fig. 15); *as-subʿ al-hāmis*<sup>13</sup> (fol. 240b 23:60); *niṣf al-sādis*<sup>14</sup> (fol. 271b 28:20); *as-subʿ al-sābi*<sup>15</sup> (fol. 299a 34:20) and *niṣf as-subʿ al-sādis*<sup>16</sup> (327a 40:40) (See Table 3). These numbers are presumably related with the seven main divisions (*manāzil*)<sup>17</sup> or the subdivisions of the Qurʾān rather than the *juzʿ* and *ḥizb* parts which will be explained in the further part of this article.

The 19<sup>th</sup> *sūra* heading giving the title of *Sūrat Maryam* on fol. 212b (Figs. 16b) framed with a gold rule, has a red coloured background which is illuminated with white scrolling branches and palmette motives, all of them contoured in black. The letters of the *basmala* are drawn boldly in

<sup>12</sup>) The one of seven of the fourth [1/7 of the 4<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>13</sup>) The one of seven of the fifth [1/7 of the 5<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>14</sup>) The half of the sixth [1/2 of the 6<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>15</sup>) The one of seven of the seventh [1/7 of the 7<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>16</sup>) The half of the six of seventh [1/2 of the 6/7].

<sup>17</sup>) According to A.V. DENFFER, the Qurʾānic text is also divided into seven parts of approximately equal length, called *manzil*, for recitation over seven days, indicated in some copies by the word *manzil* and the respective number in the margin. The ends of the various *manāzil* according to Qatāda b. al-Nuʿmān are 4:76, 8:36, 15:49, 23: 118, 34:54, 49: 18 and 114: 6. H. MUHAMMAD, *Le Saint Coran*. Traduction intégrale et nores (Paris: Club Français du Livre, n.d., XLI); A. JEFFERY, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qurʾan*, (incl. *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif* by Ibn Abī Dāwūd (Leiden, 1937), p. 118. Quoted from: A.V. DENFFER, *ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān* (An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qurʾan) Chapter 4: Form, Language and Style: Divisions of the Text. <http://islamworld.net/docs/UUQ/index.html> (download date: 26.09.2010).

Table 3. Marginal Calligraphic Decorations which Indicates the parts of the Qur'an presumably the *Manzil* (seven parts of the Qur'an recommended for reading)

|                                                                                      |           |                                                                                      |           |                                                                                     |           |                                                                                    |           |                                                                                    |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|   | Fol. 34a  |   | Fol. 64b  |   | Fol. 123a |   | Fol. 151b |   | Fol. 180b |
|  | Fol. 209b |  | Fol. 240b |  | Fol. 271a |  | Fol. 299a |  | Fol. 327a |

black and outlined with a red border while the upper part of them is hatched in red lines. This decoration differs from the illuminations of the former pages of the Qur'ān. The rosettes in the margins which mark the *khamṣāt*, the verse groups consisting of five *āyas*, are also different with their petalled rosettes in circular form and interlace decoration in the



Figure 14: Illumination in the margin with the words “as-sub<sup>c</sup> al thālith” (the one of seventh of the second) on fol.123a. (7:170) (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 15: Illumination in the margin with the words “as-sub<sup>c</sup> al-rābi” (the one of seventh of the fourth) (fol.180b) (14:36). (©Yıldız 2010)



Figure 16 a–b: Illuminated Heading of Sūrat Maryam (Virgin Mary) on fol.212b-213a. (©Yıldız 2010).

centre. They are ornamental devices without the inscription “*khamṣ*” although they indicate the fifth verses. A similar page design is also made on the opposite page on fol. 213a (Fig. 16a–b). The Qur’ān ends with *Sūrat An Nās* on fol. 418b and the *khatam al-Qur’ān* continues on fols. 418b-419b. The colophon is to be found on fol. 419b (Fig. 17), which have been also rewritten due to damage, akin to the first five folios at the beginning of the manuscript. The last lines of this colophon read as follow: “*Ferāgh min ketebehū (?) fi yevm-ül-ithneyn fi*

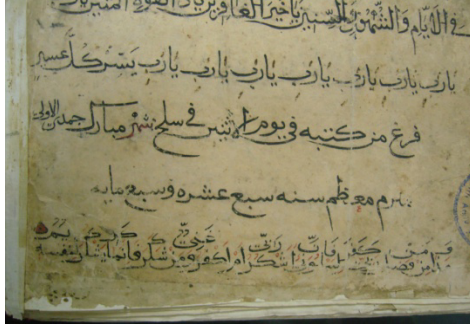


Figure 17: The colophon on fol.419b (rewritten and restored page). (©Yıldız 2010)

*selh-i shehr-i mübārek Cūmādā 'l-ūlā ..... mu'azzām sēnē seb'a 'ashar ve sab'a mi'e*". This is enlightening the reader that the original copying of the text has been completed in the year 717/1317 on the last Monday of the month *Cūmāda 'l-ūlā*.

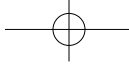
### The Provenance of the Manuscript

There is only a short *waqfiya* recorded on fol. 1a in Ottoman Turkish which verifies that this Qur'ān has been bequeathed to the Ömeriye Mosque in Nicosia<sup>18</sup> by a Muḥarrem Pasha who worked as an apprentice, responsible for sweeping the floors and burning the oil-lamps in this mosque. It reads as follows:<sup>19</sup>

This certain holy book had been bequeathed as a *waqf* to the holy mosque dedicated to Hazret-i Omar (Caliph 'Umar), let the mercy of the God be upon him, by Muḥarrem Pasha, who is in the service of the mosque as an apprentice and in charge of sweeping the floors and burning the oil lamps, and it was located in the *māḥfil-i shērif* so that it could be recited there. With his bequeath he laid out the condition of his *waqf* that it would be safely secured in the *māḥfil-i shērif* of the mosque and not to be taken out of the holy

<sup>18</sup>) Supra f.n.2

<sup>19</sup>) “İşbu kelām-ı şerif-i Hazreti Ömer Radyallāhu an'ı Cam'i şerifinde [bervalık] hizmetinde ve dahi ferraşlık ve çerağlık hizmetlerinde olan Muḥarrem (?) Paşa hasbeten lillāh-i tela vakıf eyleyüp yine Hāzreti Ömer Cam'i şerifinde vakfedip mahfil-i şerifde koymuştur ki tilāvet oluna ve bu kelām-ı şerifi cam'i-i şerifden dışarıya (?) her kim alıp giderse halıkın ... ve cümle māhlukātın laneti iki cihānda üzerine ola ā'min bihakkı sūrat-i Ta Ha ve Yā Sin. Tahriren fi gurre-i Receb'ül müreccab senehu tıs'a 'ashar 'aşar ba'de elf. Fātiha li katibehu”.



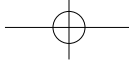
mosque, *amen*. Let the person, who will dare to take it out of the mosque, be damned with curses in both universes. Also, let someone recite the *sūras* of *Ṭā Hā*<sup>20</sup> and *Yā -Sīn* during the first day of *Receb* month in every five years for the soul of the donor. On the year one thousand nineteen (1019/1610–11). May the prayers *Fātiḥa* go to the soul of the donor.

Another addendum written on a paper in Ottoman Turkish pasted on the *doublure* of the front cover gives another *waqf* information associated with the contribution to the wage of the *imām* of Ömeriye Mosque in return of a service to recite some prayers, which reads as follows:<sup>21</sup>

Let this be bestowed upon the soul and honour of the believers in the whole universe of Islam, āmen! Ḥusayn dede, one of the disciples of the holy Mosque of Ömeriye, let the mercy of the God be upon him, that has gained the respect and love of many believers, has bequeathed one thousand and eight hundred *akchē* to the mosque and appointed the *imām* of the mosque as the trustee of the *waqf*. Accordingly the *imām* of the mosque would recite the *sūra* of *Yā Sīn* for his soul after the morning prayers and would get a wage of three hundred sixty *akchē* a year, which is the sum of twelve months interest coming from his money that would be loaned to needy people with the condition that it would only be used for true and goodwill with an interest rate of ten to twelve. Let it be continued after his replacement with another *imām* who also would be entitled to get the same wage arising from the interest rate on the condition that each morning the recitation of the *sūra* of *Yā Sīn* for the memory of his soul could be continued. Let the member of the trustees as well as the disciples of the mosque sustain and keep an eye on the function of this *waqf* for the benefit of this Holy Mosque so that this fund

<sup>20</sup>) This is the 20<sup>th</sup> *sūrah* of the Qur'ān which is mentioning the conversion of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (c. 586/590 –644), who afterwards became Caliph 'Umar. It is likely that the donor selected this *sūra* since it is bequeathed to the Ömeriye Mosque.

<sup>21</sup>) “*Hāk Te'alā cümle alem-i İslām-ı hābibi hürmet-i rahmetine müstāğrik eyle ya āmin. Hazreti Ömer Rādiyallāhü anh Cami-i Şerifi'nin cemaatinden Hüseyin Dede nam kimesne cami-i şerifde bil-fi'l imām olan İslām halifeten mütevellî tayin edip kendi ruhuşün bin sekiz yüz akçe vakfedip onu on iki hesabı üzere yılda üç yüz altmış akçe olup bu hasıl olan ribh mukabelesinde imām-ı merhum her gün sabah namazından sonra bir Sūrat-i Yā Sīn okuya ve mezburdan sonra dahi yerine her kim imām olursa minvāl-i şürüh üzerine ribh-i mezbūr'u alıp her gün Yā Sīn-i Şerif'i tilavet eyleyüp mütevellî olan vakıfnāme mücebince zinhār rehn olmayan yere akçe ve yevmiye ve ehl-i cemaatin cümlesinden rica olunan bu dergāh-ı İslām'da ihtiyaten suāl edeler ki hayrātım zayı' olmaya hakk-teālā bu mukābeledede cümlesine imān-i kāmīl verüp cemālın müşāhede müyesser eyleye āmin. Bu varaka tahrir olup bu mahalde va'z olunmaktan murād ve maksūd bu hayrat zāyi olmamakdan ve-'s selām ale'd-devām*”.



donated for the benevolence of the holy place would not be misused and this deed of document inscribed in this place would enable this charity to continue to contribute forever rather than being disbursed.

Although it is not clear why this deed of the *waqf* is pasted into this manuscript, it is a document to show the importance of Ömeriye Mosque and perhaps to authenticate the continuity by reminding the *imām* of the mosque, no matter whoever would be taking that position, to perform the requirements of the deed. Also, it could be presumed that this Qur'ān was used by the chief preacher (*imām*) of the mosque and it was the most valued one in the mosque.

We follow further information about its current location in the entries of the museum from where it found its way to the National Archive of TRNC. According to the information in an inventory card originally prepared to be displayed together with the manuscript in the museum, still preserved in it, this Qur'ān was initially bequeathed to the Ömeriye Mosque (Nicosia) from where it had been transferred first to İplik Pazarı Mosque (Nicosia),<sup>22</sup> and then into the care of the Office of the Department of Antiquities and Museums in the part of Nicosia under Turkish control. It was exhibited for a while in the Cyprus Turkish Ethnography Museum in Mawlawī Tekkē (*dervish* lodge), Nicosia, which was opened in April 1963 and predominantly in the safe-box of the Office of the Department of Antiquities and Museums due to the lack of enough security measures in the museum where one of the authors of this study was requested to give opinion about this manuscript in 1989. Subsequent to publication of the union catalogue of Cyprus Turkish Islamic manuscripts by ISAR (IRCICA) (Foundation for Research of Islamic History, Art and Culture, Istanbul) in 1995,<sup>23</sup> it has been transferred under the

<sup>22</sup>) İplik Pazarı Mosque is located in Nicosia, İplik Bazaar Quarter, in the area where there was a flax or linen market. It is located on the road opposite to the entrance of *Büyük Hamam* (Great Hamam) and on the north-western direction of Selimiye Mosque (originally St. Sophia Cathedral) and Büyük Han. Although the exact date of its construction is not known, there are two inscription tablets on the top of the entrance door informing about restoration of the mosque, the earliest giving the date 1241/1825–26 by a reference to the work of the governor of the island. It was also registered as Haremyn Ewqāf in the records of 1859–60 registers. T. BAĞIŞKAN, *Kıbrıs'ta Osmanlı Eserleri* (Lefkoşa, Kıbrıs, Kuzey Kıbrıs Müze Dostları Derneği Yayını, 2005), pp. 85–87; JEFFERY, *A Description of the Historic Monuments*, p. 59.

<sup>23</sup>) R. ŞEŞEN, M. H. ALTAN & C. İZGİ, *Kıbrıs İslam Yazmaları Kataloğu* (İstanbul: ISAR, 1995).

care of the National Archive of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as a loan piece of collection on behalf of Cyprus Turkish Ewqāf Office alongside the whole Ewqāf collection of manuscripts which were originally under the care of the Department of Antiquities and Museums as well as the ones in the other Islamic institutions in the Turkish controlled part of Nicosia in 1997. These included the collections of Sultan Mahmud II Library,<sup>24</sup> the largest collection of Islamic manuscripts in Cyprus founded in 1829,<sup>25</sup> and mosques in Nicosia, such as Selimiye, Lāleli and Arāp Aḥmet Paşa. Although the catalogue was prepared with an intention to generate an inventory of all Islamic manuscripts under the care of the Administration of Cyprus Turkish Ewqāf Office, a selection of manuscripts bearing artistic values which were under the care of the Department of the Antiquities and Museums were somehow omitted.<sup>26</sup>

### Questions Regarding the Origin of the Manuscript

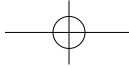
Regarding the question to answer where this manuscript would have been prepared, it could be practicable to look at some selected Qurʾān texts copied during the same century. Hence we will try to analyse the manuscript by focusing on the decorative character particularly calligraphic and ornamental devices which could be considered noteworthy. The *sūra* titles as well as the marginal decorations will be the main design aspects for our comparative analysis. It is a known fact that in the practice of writing the Qurʾān text, inscribing such words as *ʿashar*, *sajda* etc. in short Eastern Kufic script was so familiar in the district of Baghdad during the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup>) See İ. PARMAKSIZOĞLU, *Kıbrıs Sultan II. Mahmud Kütüphanesi* (Ankara, 1964) for brief information about the library and description of a limited number of manuscripts.

<sup>25</sup>) See G. ROPER (ed.), *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*, 2 Vols. (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1992), Vol.1, pp. 167–171; E. BIRNBAUM, “Turkish Manuscripts: Cataloguing Since 1960 and Manuscripts Still Uncatalogued, Part 5: Turkey and Cyprus”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 104, (1984), pp. 465–503. For Cyprus case see p. 502.

<sup>26</sup>) Nevertheless, there are several deficiencies in the ISAR catalogue not only with these omitted works but also with other entries which lacked detailed information related to the design characteristics, such as the illumination, ink colour or binding styles.

<sup>27</sup>) See D. JAMES, *Qurʾāns of the Mamlūks* (London, Alexandria Press, 1988), p. 166.



An important characteristic in this Qur'ān worth to mention is the use of three different scripts, *rayḥān* in the main text, eastern style short Kufic in the *sūra* headings and *muḥaqqaq* script in the *basmalas*. This type of practice to write in three different scripts in one text and using different coloured ink is known to have been extensively exercised in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian geography.<sup>28</sup> Yet, almost no manuscript bearing three different styles of script in one text with diverse coloured ink has been traced out among the Mamlūk Qur'āns by David James, an expert in Qur'ān manuscripts. One of the Qur'āns in the N. Khalili Collection (with the size 39.2x32 cm and dated 1300–1350) which is thought to have been written in Yemen bears a similarity with Ömeriye Qur'ān with its three distinct styles of scripts.

Some examples that survived up to current times from the same district also designate calligraphers' fondness to practice in *rayḥān* script during the first three decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. These are the Qur'ān examples that were written with *rayḥān* script 13 or 11 lines to the page by some well known calligraphers like Mubarak Šāh b. Aḥmad al-Suyūfī or Arḡūn al-Kāmīlī, who were assumed to have been the students of Yāqūt al-Mušta'šimī (d. 1298). Yāqūt al-Mušta'šimī, who lived in the Baghdad area during the Abbasid period in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, is renowned to have laid out the principles of six different styles of Islamic script<sup>29</sup> which were followed by later generations.<sup>30</sup> *Rayḥān* script, as one of the six styles of Islamic script, is proven to have been originated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century while it was so commonly used in the 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian Qur'ān script whereas this practice was rarely used in the Mamlūk Qur'āns.<sup>31</sup>

David JAMES also suggested that, no example of *muḥaqqaq* script inscribed in red or illuminated with gold has been discovered so far among the Mamlūk Qur'āns.<sup>32</sup> In view of this information and the practice of

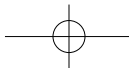
<sup>28</sup>) For a Qur'ān, dating AD 1300–1320, in which each line was inscribed with different colour ink see JAMES, *The Master Scribes: Qur'āns of 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD*, p. 108 no. 23.

<sup>29</sup>) JAMES, *The Master Scribes: Qur'āns of 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD*, p. 60.

<sup>30</sup>) Mubarek Shah al-Suyūfī is recorded as one of the famous pupils of the *sittah*, the six pupils of Yāqūt. Another calligrapher Arghun al-Kāmīlī is also known to be one of the other well known pupils of Yaqut. For the *Qur'ans* inscribed by both calligraphers, see JAMES, *Qur'ans of the Mamlūks*, pp. 150–152, 157–160.

<sup>31</sup>) *Ibid* p. 20.

<sup>32</sup>) JAMES, *The Master Scribes: Qur'āns of 10th to 14th Centuries AD*, p. 160 no. 40.



three different scripts, it is obvious that the manuscript we are analysing could not be considered as a work of Mamlūk origin. Therefore we can say that the design of the text, in which there is a selectivity for an assortment of three distinct types of scripts as well as the application of different ink colours, are indications to prove that this manuscript was prepared or being inspired from the ones copied in the Persian geography.

Another characteristic which suggest inspiration from Persian geography is the use of the unusual decorative symbols in calligraphic form in the margins which could be considered as a sort of markers of the certain parts or fractions of the Qurʾān. These marks *as-subʿ al- thānī*<sup>33</sup> (fol. 64b 4:76), *as-subʿ al-thālī*<sup>34</sup> (fol. 123a 7:170) (Fig. 14); *niṣf as-sub*<sup>35</sup> (fol. 151b 10:60); *as-subʿ l-rābi*<sup>36</sup> (fol. 180b 14:36) (Fig. 15); *as-subʿ al-ḥāmis*<sup>37</sup> (fol. 240b 23:60); *niṣf al-sādis*<sup>38</sup> (327a 40:40) (see Table 3) already mentioned above,<sup>39</sup> are some of the most remarkable curious aspects of the manuscript which could give more clues about its original inspiration. By judging from certain fact that all of them, except *niṣf-i sittā* (271b 28:20),<sup>40</sup> included the word *as-subʿ* (one of seventh), we could suggest a theory that these are the indications of the *manāzil* which are the seven divisions of the Qurʾān of approximately equal length for recitation of the whole text over seven days. Thus, we could also consider *niṣf al-Qurʾān wa-niṣf as-subʿ* fol. On fol 209a (Fig 7; Table 3), one of the rectangular formed calligraphic decorations mentioned earlier, to have been the first of these signs to indicate the half of the first part of the seven *manāzil*. Although many surviving Qurʾān texts from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries written in single volumes usually had 30 parts *juzʿ* and 60 parts *ḥizb*, as Nasser D. KHALILI also explained, there are some examples that had divisions ranging from 2 to 60 volumes (each division known as *juzʿ*), mainly from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries during which there were several improvements in the format of the Qurʾān texts. A well

<sup>33</sup>) The one of seventh of the second [1/7 of the 2<sup>nd</sup>].

<sup>34</sup>) The one of the seventh of the third [1/7 of the 3<sup>rd</sup>].

<sup>35</sup>) The half of the one of the seventh [1/2 of 1/7].

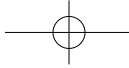
<sup>36</sup>) The one of seven of the fourth [1/7 of the 4<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>37</sup>) The one of seven of the fifth [1/7 of the 5<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>38</sup>) The half of the sixth [1/2 of the 6<sup>th</sup>].

<sup>39</sup>) See supra f.n. 9–16.

<sup>40</sup>) It could be thought that since the style of script and colour of the decoration on fol. 271b (*niṣf-i sittā*) is different as well as the wording not including “seventh”, it could be assumed that this mark was added later.



known example for the case of seven parts divisions is the Mamlūk Qur'ān written for Baybars al-Jashankir between 1304 and 1307, and illuminated by Sandal.<sup>41</sup> As also remarked by Barbara BREND,<sup>42</sup> although the Mamlūks designed the Qur'ān texts usually as thirty parts to be read during a month, occasionally seven parts were also made as the example of the Baybars Qur'ān which was probably intended for the ḥānqa he was founding. Colin F. BAKER pointed out for the scarcity of Qur'ān copies with seven divisions.<sup>43</sup>

We could suggest at this point that this manuscript is an example of an archetype format of Qur'ān which was intended to organise the text of the Qur'ān with symbolic decorations in the margins with a combination of cardinal numbers in written form so as to guide the reader for the divisions or pauses during recitation. These are mainly marked with geometrically designed rosettes or abstracted flower motifs in later Qur'ān illuminations. The repetition of the word *as-sub* ' (one of seventh) in the marginal illumination is set up in a mystical way based on a logic so as to recall the reader the amount he had completed in each part of the seven divisions of the Qur'ān rather than showing the exact ending of the part intended to be read in one day, so as the whole text to be completed in one week, starting on Friday and ending on Thursday night. This theory in fact can be attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions, called to mind once more through the teachings of medieval Islamic scholars like al-Ghazālī (1058–1111), with a set of principles suggested for the recitation of the Qur'ān and also formatting the text with divisions based on the amount of Qur'ān reading during a day.

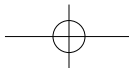
It is well known that al-Ghazālī, who is believed to have developed the orthodox form of Sufism in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, set up some theories for external and internal rules for the recitation of the Qur'ān in the eighth book of his greatest work, *The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyā' Ulūm ad-Dīn)*.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, he explained his theory regarding the external rules of recitation concerning the amount of Qur'ān reading required in which he classified the Qur'ān readers into four grades accord-

<sup>41</sup>) N. D. KHALILI, *The Timeline History of Islamic Art and Architecture* (United Kingdom: Worth Press, 2005), pp. 51, 53.

<sup>42</sup>) B. BREND, *Islamic Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), p. 117.

<sup>43</sup>) C. F. BAKER, *Qur'an Manuscripts, Calligraphy, Illumination, Design*, (London: British Library), p. 30.

<sup>44</sup>) M. ABUL QUASEM, *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an/Al-Ghazālī's Theory* (Bangi, Malaysia: University of Malaya Press, 1979 [1979 second edition]).



ing to capacity varying from reading the entire Qur'ān in one day to within a month, each day one of the thirty parts. He did not favour both of these extreme ends while he esteemed the recitation of the entire Qur'ān once in a week or rather twice or trice in a week depending on the occupation of the believer. As he stated:

Thus, accordingly, if the Qur'ān reader is one of the devotees traversing the Sufi path by performing good acts of the body, he should not do less than read the entire Qur'ān twice a week while in the case where the reader is one of those who are traversing the Sufi path by performing actions of the soul and by different types of reflection, or one of those who are engaged in spreading knowledge, then there is nothing wrong in reducing the reading of the entire Qur'ān to once a week.<sup>45</sup>

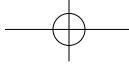
In fact, al-Ghazālī seemed to be in favour of the second type of reading as he is attributing this to the Prophet Muḥammad who ordered 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar to read the entire Qur'ān once in every seven days. Likewise some companions, consisting of 'Uṭmān, Zayd b. Thābit, Ibn Mas'ūd and Ubayy b. Ka'b, used to complete the reading of the entire Qur'ān on every Friday.<sup>46</sup> Al-Ghazālī had also described the rule for dividing the Qur'ān into several parts, in particular into seven, for the convenience of recitation again by referring to the Tradition and companions of the Prophet. Accordingly 'Uṭmān's<sup>47</sup> and Ibn Mas'ūd's<sup>48</sup> reci-

<sup>45</sup>) ABUL QUASEM, *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an/Al-Ghazālī's Theory*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>46</sup>) Ibid. p. 36.

<sup>47</sup>) According to Muḥammad's companion Uthmān he used to read the Qur'ān from the *sūra* of *al-Baqarah* and reach the *sūra* of *al-Mā'ida* on Friday night, from the *sūra* of *al-An'am* to the *sūra* of *Hūd* on Saturday night, from the *sūra* of *Yūsuf* to the *sūra* of *Maryam* on Sunday night, from the *sūra* of *Tā Hā* to the *sūra* of *Tā Sīn Mīm*, (Mūsā) and Pharaoh (Fir'awn) on Monday night, from *sūra* of the *al-'Ankabūt* to the *sūra* of *Šād* on Tuesday night, from the *sūra* of *Tanzīl* (progressive revelation) to the *sūra* of the Most Gracious (*ar-Rahman*) on Wednesday night, and he used to complete the reading on Thursday night. ABUL QUASEM, *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an/Al-Ghazālī's Theory*, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup>) Although Ibn Mas'ūd read it in seven days, his division was different. The first part consisted of three *sūras*, the second part of five *sūras*, the third of seven *sūras*, the fourth of nine *sūras*, the fifth of eleven *sūras*, the sixth of thirteen *sūras*, and the seventh which is known as *al-Mufaṣṣal* (divided into several pieces) starts from the *sūra* of *Qāf* and ends with the end of the Qur'ān., ABUL QUASEM *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an/Al-Ghazālī's Theory*, p. 38.



tation were mainly followed and formed the manners of the formative period of Qur'ān reading and copying. Al-Ghazālī referred to some earlier scholars like Abu Dāwūd, Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (d.110/728), Ībrāhīm Yazīd al-Naḥā'ī (d.96/714–15), Ibn Māğā and al-Rab'ī l-Qazwīnī, all of them being Sufi disciples, and mentioned that this division of the Qur'ān into seven parts is prior to the execution of its division into five parts, ten parts, and thirty parts while any division than this is something newly introduced.<sup>49</sup> There are other sources mainly attributing the seven divisions called *manāzil* to Qatāda<sup>50</sup> or to Ḥamza b. Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt (d.156/773)<sup>51</sup>. Some sources even mention the letters and words counted to determine these divisions.<sup>52</sup> However, a comparison of our case with some data collected from several sources reveal that these marginal decorations in the Ömeriye Qur'ān have been set up at different intervals slightly closer to the readings of 'Uṣmān (mentioned by ABUL QUASEM) and Ḥamza b. Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt. The decorations show that the calligrapher or illuminator of Ömeriye Qur'ān designed these with the same aim although he set up the seven parts in a more mystical way based on his own reading experience.

As also commented by ABUL QUASEM “it is mainly the ascetics and the Sufis who are most concerned with Qur'ān reading, since they had been the people who most ardently desired to draw guidance from the Qur'ān in different aspects of their lives and to improve their relationship with God by means of supererogatory worship”.<sup>53</sup>

One more remarkable character of the manuscript at hand, which was originally prepared in 717/1317, is the use of pause marks recalling inverted commas (Fig. 3). Moreover, some of the vocalisation marks in red coloured ink, the use of marginal decorations such as *ushar* marks to indicate the end of every ten verses and the *sajda* markers, the parts at

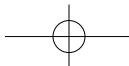
<sup>49</sup>) Ibid pp. 38–39.

<sup>50</sup>) Supra f.n.17.

<sup>51</sup>) The divisions are arranged accordingly: 4 chapters (1–4); 5 chapters (5–9); 7 chapters (10–16); 9 chapters (17–25); 11 chapters (26–36); 13 chapters (37–49); 65 chapters (50–114). A. JAFFER & M. JAFFER, *Qur'anic Sciences* (London: ICAS Press, 2009), p. 16.

<sup>52</sup>) His divisions suggested by Ibn Kathīr for seven parts are: 1: 4:55; 2: 7:147; 3rd: 13:35; 4th: 22:34; 5th: 33:36; 6th: 48:6; 7th: end of 114:6. See S. S. R. AL MUBARAKPURI, *et. al. Tafsīr b. Kathīr [Imām Abū l-Fidā Īsmā'īl b. Kathīr, abridged Volume, Vol. I (Part 1–2) (Darussalem, Paris, 2001 [2003 Second edition])*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>53</sup>) ABUL QUASEM, *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an/Al-Ghazālī's Theory*, p. 11.



which the reader of the Qur'ān should prostrate in prayer, are all designed in bizarre forms. However, the interlace (intertwining) and interweaving rosette ornament motifs used to indicate the *ʿaṣar* or *sajdah* marks in our manuscript (Fig. 11) have been prevalent since the 11<sup>th</sup> century Seljuk era in Persian geography. These ornament motifs have been used in more sophisticated and aesthetic forms in the manuscripts prepared during the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>54</sup> A Qur'ān text prepared by Aḥmad as-Suhrawardī, one of the pupils of Yāqūt, and dated 1318, that was inscribed in *nashī* script and using interlacing motifs in the illumination of the text, could be an example to this type of decorative repertoire.<sup>55</sup> Regardless of the crudely designed forms of these interlacing motifs in the Ömeriye Qur'ān, we could say that they bear similarity with the 14<sup>th</sup> century high quality works.

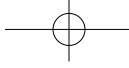
Furthermore, the manner of designing the page of *Sūrat Maryam* in a different format and illuminating the *sūra* title (Fig. 16 a-b) are other peculiar details which could be observed in the tradition of 14<sup>th</sup> century Qur'āns prepared in Anatolian geography.<sup>56</sup> With these design characteristics, the manuscript presented here bears similarity with the Qur'āns prepared in Anatolia which have been formed under the impact of the Ilkhanid and Mamlūk influences that were intended for the recitation by the members of Sufi or *mawlavī* orders.

This similarity, in spite of geographical differences, would recall a certain characteristic that resulted due to common tendencies to give more emphasis for the illumination of *Sūrat Maryam* in the Qur'ān text copies

<sup>54</sup>) The first scholar who attempted to make commentary studies on manuscripts from the 14th century which bear exact dates is Richard Ettinghausen. According to his theory, the designs of the Ilkhanid manuscripts are having their origin in Seljuk works while the decorative compositions from these works were also reflected in the architectural decoration in Anatolia and Azerbaijan geography. R. ETtinghausen, "Manuscript Illumination", in: A. U. POPE (ed.), *A Survey of Persian Art* (Oxford, 1939), pp. 1954–1959.

<sup>55</sup>) For a Qur'ān inscribed by Aḥmad as-Suhrawardī, see: M. UNUSTASI (ed.), *1400. Yılında Kur'an-ı Kerim, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi Kur'an-ı Kerim Koleksiyonu* (İstanbul: Antik A.Ş., 2010), pp. 244–247, cat. No. 53.

<sup>56</sup>) Z. TANINDI, "Kitap ve Tezhibi", in: Halil İnalcık – Günsel Renda (eds.), *Osmanlı Uygarlığı*, Vol. 2 (Ankara, 2004), p. 871; Z. TANINDI, "Anadolu Kökenli Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarında Müzehhep Meryem Suresi", *İslam ve Hristiyan Sanatında Melekler, Peygamberler ve Azizler, Sanat Tarihi Atölye Çalışması, Özetler* (Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sanat Tarihi Bölümü Yayınları, 2008), p. 4; Z. TANINDI, "Başlangıcından Osmanlı'ya Tezhip Sanatı", in: A. R. ÖZCAN (ed.), *Hat ve Tezhip Sanatı* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2009), p. 248.



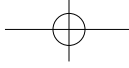
within the environs of mystical orders during the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, taking into consideration all the aspects explained above, the issue of a strong possibility that this manuscript had been prepared in Persian geography is becoming more feasible. It is also possible to make further suggestions that Ömeriye Qur'ān is the work of a skilled *khāttatūn* (calligrapher) from a *ṣūfī* order while it is illuminated in a primitive manner presumably by a *mudahhib* (illuminator) who was also a follower of a mystic order or a *mawlavī* tradition. All these characteristics reveal that this *mudahhib* was aware of the teachings of the Islamic scholars of the medieval Islamic era that were keeping on the principles of Tradition or *Sunna* of Muḥammad and his close companions. The marginal additions in red letters on fols. 17b, 29b, 30a and 36b are also strengthening the hypothesis that the illuminator is a follower of the Tradition of 'Uthmān as there are references to the approval of readings of Ḥamza, al-Kisā'i, Nāfi', Āṣim, Abū 'Amr, Ibn Kaṭīr and Ibn 'Āmir<sup>57</sup> who were in fact the scholars to develop the seven different styles of reading based on local dialects in the second century of the Islamic calendar.<sup>58</sup>

### Concluding Remarks

In this study, it is endeavoured to analyse the calligraphic and decorative style of this manuscript while at the same time attempts were made to suggest some ideas about its history and by which means it

<sup>57</sup>) These names are related to the seven different readings of the codex which were declared equally authoritative, legitimate and divinely canonical readings ascribed to seven 'readers' who broadly represented the most important local traditions: Abū 'Amr b. al-A'lā (Basra, d. C. 154/770); 'Āṣim b. Bahdala (Kufa, d. 128/745); Ḥamza b. Ḥabīb (Kufa, d. 156/772); Ibn 'Āmir (Damascus, d. 118/736); Ibn Kathīr (Mecca, d. 120/738); al-Kisā'i (Kufa, d. 189/805) and Nāfi' b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (Medina, d. C. 169/785). A generation later, seven more 'readings' were recognised as canonical, making a total of fourteen. Further readings were preserved by learned tradition, but considered by Muslim tradition as 'deviant' (*shādhidha*), i.e. non-canonical. O. LEAMAN (ed.). *The Qur'ān: an encyclopedia* (New York: Taylor & Francis), p. 534; R. BELL & W. M. WATT, *Introduction to the Qur'ān* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1970), p. 49; J. D. McAULIFFE, *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 149.

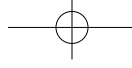
<sup>58</sup>) Perhaps, the calligraphic decorative devices and these additional notes in the Qur'ān must be evaluated from the linguistic point of view to get a more clear idea about its origin.



found its way to Ömeriye Mosque, Nicosia. However, it could be briefly said that this manuscript is one of the most interesting Qur'ān copies in the North Cyprus collection in view of its bizarre decoration style not as an art piece but for the unusual design and scheme of its illuminations which we presume is providing an information for the challenge of the calligrapher and illuminator to guide the Qur'ān reader. This Qur'ān with its unique illumination character must have been probably copied in Mosul (?), Baghdad (?) or Tabriz (?) during the Ilkhanid period by a *dervish* or Sufi calligrapher<sup>59</sup> who tried to illuminate the work in his own primitive style although it seems that he followed the teachings of some important philosophers like Al-Ghazālī or Qatāda who wrote some works on the manners of recitation. Similarly it was delivered by a Sufi or a *dervish* to Cyprus where it was kept for centuries by Muslims either before or later than the Ottoman conquest that occurred in 1570–71.<sup>60</sup> Hence, one of our aims in this article is to acknowledge this manuscript as a rare piece of Qur'ān copy with its unusual character of illumination designs to indicate the end of the verses and the parts according to the seven divisions for the recitation of the Qur'ān within a week time or the signs for the prostration of the reader, which are based on the earliest traditions of the Qur'ān writing. Therefore this manuscript was illuminated with a free manner following the teachings of some Sufi scholars, like al-Ghazālī, one of the renowned Sufi scholar, who favoured the recitation amount of the Qur'ān within a week time, an idea coming from the formative period of Islamic thought based on the *Sunna* of the Prophet and his Companions, such as 'Uṣmān and Ibn Mas'ūd. With these specifications, we believe that this manuscript is worth attention and all measures have to taken for its protection as a cultural heritage, particularly by registering it as a world heritage through a scholarly publication.

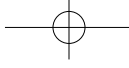
<sup>59</sup>) The most significant feature of the 14<sup>th</sup> century was the increasing and spreading of the mystical orders in the community whereas many eminent calligraphers were the Sufis. See, M. LINGS, *Splendours of Qur'an Calligraphy and Illumination* (Lichtenstein, Vaduz, Lichtenstein, Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, 2005), p. 38.

<sup>60</sup>) We would like to acknowledge kind helps of Hesna Haral who transcribe the *waqf* texts and Assist. Prof. Dr. Munther Moh'd who read some Arabic texts as well as the valuable suggestions and critical ideas of Prof. Dr. Zeren Tanındı who encouraged us to restructuring this article.



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